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Fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

I. Introduction

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Security Council resolution 1765 (2007), by which the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the French forces until 15 January 2008, expressed its intention to review the mandates of UNOCI and the French forces by 15 October and requested me to report, before that date, on the implementation of the key steps of the peace process. The report provides an update on major developments in Côte d'Ivoire since my report of 14 May 2007 (S/2007/275).

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire has remained generally calm since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement on 4 March 2007. However, an attack on an aircraft carrying Prime Minister Soro in Bouaké on 29 June created tensions and underscored the fragile state of the security situation in the country, as well as the Ouagadougou Agreement. The aircraft came under rocket fire shortly after landing at Bouaké airport, where the Prime Minister had arrived to install magistrates appointed to preside over the mobile court operations for the identification of the population. Prime Minister Soro escaped unharmed but four of his close aides were killed and several others were seriously wounded. President Gbagbo made a nationally broadcasted statement in which he strongly condemned the attack and stressed that potential spoilers would not undermine the peace process. Prime Minister Soro insisted that the ceremony to install the mobile courts magistrates should proceed on the same day, despite the attack, and pledged to continue to implement the Ouagadougou Agreement.

3. President Gbagbo requested me, in a letter dated 12 July 2007, to facilitate the establishment of an independent international inquiry into the incident, in addition to the investigation already launched at the national level. To that end, an exploratory team from relevant United Nations departments will travel to Côte d'Ivoire to collect detailed information from the Ivorian authorities, which would enable me to develop realistic options for responding to President Gbagbo's request.

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4. In another serious incident, on 24 May 2007, members of the Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire looted the offices of two human rights organizations in Abidjan with considerable damage to property. In August, students from the same organization were involved in a number of other violent incidents, including an attack on a police station to free their comrades from lawful custody, the ransacking of the offices of a national newspaper and the hijacking of a United Nations vehicle carrying three passengers.

5. Meanwhile, the security situation in the volatile west of the country continues to improve, as the Ivorian mixed police units began their operations with support from United Nations police officers. The units provided security support for national school examinations, which were conducted throughout the country for the first time since the crisis began in 2003. The unit deployed to Zéalé conducted regular patrols of villages bordering Liberia to monitor the security situation.

6. The north of the country, which remains under the control of Forces nouvelles commanders, grew increasingly insecure owing to the continued absence of the national law enforcement agencies and a functioning justice system. Forces nouvelles elements do not receive regular salaries and continue to resort to extortion for their livelihood. Armed robberies have also been reported along the main highways. Meanwhile, the status of some 600 police auxiliaries, who were trained by United Nations police to maintain law and order in the north, is still undefined. According to the Ouagadougou Agreement, the 600 police auxiliaries from the Forces nouvelles are expected to provide security for the redeployment of State officials to the north.

7. UNOCI troops continued to conduct regular patrols along the borders with Liberia and Guinea to monitor the situation and prevent cross-border movement of weapons or armed groups. In that regard, the Mission and the United Nations Mission in Liberia carried out concurrent patrols on their respective sides of the Ivorian-Liberian border. The missions' contiguous military contingents also participated in regular coordination and information-sharing meetings on both sides of the border.

III. Political developments

8. The overall political atmosphere in Côte d'Ivoire has remained generally positive as the Ivorian parties continue to work together in implementing the Ouagadougou Agreement. President Gbagbo and the new Prime Minister, Guillaume Soro, continue to maintain a good working relationship. Reconciliation efforts also continued between the youth wings of the Young Patriots and the Forces nouvelles, culminating in a visit by the leader of the Young Patriots, Charles Blé Goudé, to the headquarters of the Forces nouvelles in Bouaké, on 10 June.

9. While the opposition political parties continue to reaffirm their support for the Ouagadougou Agreement, they have expressed concern about several issues. Reacting to a 6 August statement by President Gbagbo in which he said that national elections could take place by the end of 2007, the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix pointed out that rushing the elections could put in jeopardy key aspects of the Agreement, especially the identification of the population.

10. On 14 August, Prime Minister Soro met with the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix, and reassured them of his commitment to preserving the credibility of the electoral process, which he said was more important than adhering to strict deadlines. On 16 August, President Gbagbo explained that his 6 August statement was not a formal proposal concerning the date of the elections. Subsequently, on 13 September, the Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission, Mr. Mambé Beugré, indicated that, if the mobile courts operations were effectively launched on 25 September and last for three months, the first round of the presidential elections could be organized by October 2008.

11. In the meantime, the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix also expressed their opposition to the termination, under Security Council resolution 1765 (2007) of the mandate of the High Representative for the elections, and wrote to the Facilitator of the Ivorian peace process, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, requesting him to ask the Security Council to reconsider that decision. On 20 August, I sent a letter to the Facilitator, requesting him to clarify to the leaders of the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix that Security Council resolution 1765 (2007) did not in any way diminish the role of the United Nations in certifying all stages of the electoral process. The Facilitator sent a letter to the Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix on 31 August, in which he stressed that the termination of the mandate of the High Representative for the elections had not resulted in the abolition of the role of the United Nations in certification since it was now entrusted to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. President Compaoré also emphasized in his letter that the arbitration role, previously exercised by the High Representative for the elections, is now the prerogative of the Facilitator, who could be assisted in this regard by UNOCI, as appropriate and upon his request.

12. On 12 September, the newly appointed Special Representative of the Facilitator in Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Boureima Badini, arrived in Abidjan. He immediately held a series of consultations with international partners, including the Officer-in-Charge of UNOCI, as well as with President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro and key Ivorian political leaders, to take stock of progress made and identify practical ways of helping to move the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement forward. In keeping with paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 1765 (2007), the United Nations is providing logistical support and close protection to the Facilitator's Special Representative.

IV. Status of implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement

13. As indicated in my report of 14 May 2007 (S/2007/275), the schedule for implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement set out the following key timelines: setting up of the integrated command centre beginning on 18 March 2007 (two weeks after the signing of the Agreement); establishment of the institutional framework for implementing the Agreement starting on 1 April (four weeks after the signing of the Agreement); formation of the new interim Government by 8 April (five weeks after the signing of the Agreement); removal of the zone of confidence and creation of the mixed police and military units beginning on 15 April (one week after the formation of the new Government); dismantling and disarmament of the militias starting on 23 April (two weeks after the formation of the new Government), to be completed within two weeks (by 7 May); cantonment of the

former fighting forces, storage of their weapons under the supervision of the impartial forces (UNOCI and the Licorne troops) and the re-establishment of State administration throughout the country and the launching of mobile court hearings, all starting by 23 April (seven weeks after the signing of the Agreement); voter registration and identification beginning on 21 May (one month after the beginning of the mobile courts hearings); unification of the two forces and enrolment of ex-combatants into the civic service programme starting on 5 June (15 days after the beginning of the voter registration process); and preparation and issuance of identity cards and voters' cards beginning once the voters register is officially adopted. The schedule envisages completion of all those tasks within a period of 10 months, that is by 4 January 2008, followed by the organization of a presidential election.

14. The implementation of the Agreement progressed well in the first three months. However, the implementation process started losing momentum in June, in particular because of the limited capacity of national institutions charged with the implementation of key tasks. In addition, Prime Minister Soro has maintained that it is more important to allow adequate time to resolve the fundamental issues at the core of the Ivorian crisis than to focus on meeting the specific deadlines stipulated in the Agreement.

15. On 11 May, the Facilitator of the Ivorian peace process convened the first meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee of the Ouagadougou Agreement, comprising the representatives of President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro. The meeting stressed the need to accelerate the implementation of key tasks, in particular the dismantling of the militias, the disarmament of former combatants, the redeployment of State administration throughout Côte d'Ivoire and the identification of the population. The Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Agreement, which held its first meeting on 12 June, also called on the Prime Minister to address the delays in the implementation of the Agreement. On 4 September, the Facilitator convened the second session of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee, at which he stressed that the parties should establish and adhere to concrete timelines and benchmarks for the implementation of the Agreement. The members of the international consultative organ established by resolution 1765 (2007) also attended the meeting, and echoed the Facilitator's emphasis on setting and adhering to specific timelines to ensure that the momentum of the peace process is sustained.

A. Setting up of the integrated command centre

16. It will be recalled that the integrated command centre, which is responsible for leading the implementation of the military and security aspects of the Ouagadougou Agreement, was established on 16 April. However, it continues to face serious constraints in its operations during the period under review due to the lack of the requisite planning, logistics, personnel and financial capacity. UNOCI is providing security, logistical and technical support to the centre, so as to enable it to perform its key tasks, in particular with regard to the deployment of mixed police units in the former zone of confidence.

B. Deployment of mixed units, lifting of the zone of confidence and establishment of the green line

17. The Ouagadougou Agreement calls for the deployment of mixed police units to maintain law and order in the areas covered by the Zone of Confidence as UNOCI withdraws from the Zone. The deployment of the mixed police units was delayed and occurred gradually because of the limited capacity of the integrated command centre, the lack of logistical and financial support for the units and the challenges faced by the Forces nouvelles in deploying its personnel to the units. The integrated command centre finally completed the deployment of the six mixed units to Zéalé and Bangolo in the west, N'Gatta Dolikro and Bonoufla in the centre and Famienkro and Kokpingué in the east, on 15 September. However, the composition of the two units deployed at Famienkro and Kokpingué, in the east, is still incomplete as the Forces nouvelles personnel have yet to join those units. In addition, the Forces nouvelles personnel deployed in the rest of the units are not receiving their salaries as the issue of their ranks remains unresolved. Consequently, some of the personnel often resort to extortion.

18. With the establishment of the six mixed police units, UNOCI has deactivated its checkpoints and completed the establishment of 17 observation points along the green line which replaces the zone of confidence. However, UNOCI forces maintain a quick reaction force and capability to re-activate any of the former checkpoints at short notice, should the security situation in the former zone of confidence so demand. Given the delays encountered in lifting the zone of confidence, UNOCI, in consultation with the integrated command centre, is now revising the timelines stipulated in the Ouagadougou Agreement for the phased removal of the green line.

C. Unification of the defence and security forces

19. One of the tasks assigned to the integrated command centre under the Ouagadougou Agreement is the unification and restructuring of the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire. No progress has been made in unifying the defence and security forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Forces nouvelles, beyond the setting up of the integrated command centre and the mixed police units. The main obstacle is the lack of agreement between the signatories of the Ouagadougou Agreement on the ranks and number of Forces nouvelles personnel that should be absorbed in the new armed forces. Discussions on that important issue are ongoing under the auspices of the Facilitator.

D. Disarmament and dismantling of militias

20. On 19 May, President Gbagbo officially launched the dismantling of militias during a symbolic weapons destruction ceremony in Guiglo, during which militia leaders handed over 555 weapons on behalf of four armed militia groups in the west. Those weapons were in turn handed over to UNOCI. However, the integrated command centre has not put in place a structured mechanism to carry forward the disarmament and dismantling of the militias since the 19 May ceremony. In order to move the process forward, the national institutions responsible for disarmament, leaders of the armed forces, the Prime Minister's office and UNOCI met to develop

a revised concept of operations for the process. In addition, UNOCI established four sites in the western part of the country where the weapons of militias would be collected, and the Minister for Defence announced that the operation would be relaunched on 31 July and run for a period of one month. However, the operation was stalled as the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Forces nouvelles have yet to agree on the questions of the military ranks and quotas for the Forces nouvelles in the new army. Meanwhile, the Minister requested UNOCI to develop a simplified concept of operations.

E. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

21. The implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has encountered challenges similar to those concerning the dismantling and disarmament of the militias. A ceremony was held in Bouaké on 30 July to launch the disarmament of the Forces nouvelles. President Gbagbo and six regional leaders attended the ceremony. However, as in the case of the dismantling and disarmament of the militias, the national institutions responsible, including the integrated command centre, have not taken follow-up action and the implementation of the disarmament programme has not moved forward. The main obstacle cited by the Forces nouvelles is the unresolved issue of the ranks and numbers of Forces nouvelles personnel expected to join the unified army. The Forces nouvelles have also informed UNOCI that they prefer a simplified concept of operations which would enable those eligible to join the army to do so without having to disarm, while the rest of the Forces nouvelles personnel would join the civic service programme.

22. In anticipation of the commencement of the disarmament programme, UNOCI has established an integrated implementation support cell that is co-located with the integrated command centre's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration cell in Yamoussoukro. In addition, UNOCI has begun construction of four additional cantonment sites in the northern cities of Odienné, Ferkessédougou, Ouangolodougou and Kani, as well as four weapons collection points in the western cities of Bloléquin, Toulépleu, Guiglo and Duékoué, as mentioned in paragraph 20 above, which are envisaged in the original concept of operations for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and the dismantling and disarmament of the militias.

F. Restoration of State administration

23. The re-establishment of State administration throughout the country, which was to be conducted from 23 April to 22 July, has also encountered significant delays. Three important presidential decrees were signed during the period under review, appointing key civil servants to be redeployed throughout the country. The first decree, issued on 5 June, appointed 158 préfets and secretaries-general of préfectures, including four women; the second decree, on the same day, appointed magistrates for 45 jurisdictions for the planned mobile court operations; and the third decree, on 15 August, appointed 296 new sous-préfets, including one woman.

24. The Prime Minister installed the préfet for Bouaké on 18 June, but the majority of the préfets deployed in other areas returned to Abidjan immediately after

their installation because of inadequate facilities and the poor living conditions in their respective areas of responsibility. Similar challenges are facing the deployment of the newly appointed judges and sous-préfets, since in most parts of the country, the local government infrastructure is in a state of disrepair. As at 18 September, 26 préfets out of 28 had been installed in their areas of responsibility in the north, while 106 out of 296 sous-préfets had been redeployed. In addition, some 85 mayors were also re-installed in August, during a ceremony held by the Minister of Interior in Bouaké.

25. The National Commission for the Redeployment of the Administration began payment of outstanding salary and allowance arrears owed to redeployed civil servants during the period under review. As indicated in my last report, out of 24,437 civil servants displaced by the conflict, 12,343 had already returned to their posts, including 3,962 to the west and 8,381 to the north of the country. The three-month payment exercise began on 22 June, following a spate of strike actions taken by civil servants in the west and north to protest against the Government's delays in paying arrears. Meanwhile, the redeployment of the remaining 12,094 civil servants is yet to be completed, owing, in part, to a lack of adequate funding.

26. The redeployment of judicial personnel to the north of the country, beyond the magistrates expected to preside over the mobile courts operations, remains very limited. One judge and two prosecutors for the court of appeals in Bouaké were installed in June, pursuant to the 5 June presidential decree, but the remaining personnel for the courts have yet to be appointed.

G. Identification of the population and elections

27. The Ouagadougou Agreement implementation schedule envisaged that the mobile courts operations and the reconstitution of civil registers would be launched concurrently with the disarmament processes on 23 April, while the identification of the population and registration of voters would begin on 21 May. Those timelines have not been met. On 28 June, Prime Minister Soro established a working group on the mobile courts operations and the reconstruction of destroyed or lost registers, and created a second working group on identification to work out the necessary arrangements for those key processes. However, the working groups only started working in August, after the Prime Minister announced that the mobile courts operations would begin in early September.

28. On 4 September, the second meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee, chaired by President Compaoré, called for the mobile court operations to begin by the end of September. On 11 and 12 September, the working groups and the Prime Minister discussed the modus operandi and security arrangements for the mobile courts operations and announced that operations would begin on 25 September. On 24 September, the Working Group on mobile courts agreed on the modus operandi for the mobile courts operations. On 25 September, the Minister for Justice officially launched the mobile courts operations in two jurisdictions: Ouragahio, in the west, and Ferkéssedougou, in the north. UNOCI assisted in transporting the mobile court teams to Ferkéssedougou and dispatched observation teams to the two sites. However, in view of the lack of adequate sensitization which resulted in low turnout at the two sites, the mobile courts operations were suspended in order to allow more time for the necessary preparations.

29. The appointment of judges and préfets mentioned in paragraph 18 above represents an important preliminary step in the preparation for the identification of the population and the elaboration of the voter roll. In their role as chairpersons of local commissions for the supervision of identification, the sous-préfets serve as guarantors of the credibility of the process. The appointment of new judges on 5 July makes it possible to launch mobile courts operations in 63 jurisdictions, covering the entire country.

H. Voter registration

30. Delays in the launching of the identification of the population prevent the beginning of the related voter registration process. Nonetheless, the Independent Electoral Commission has taken some steps towards preparing for the elections. In order to enhance the transparency of the electoral process, the Commission presented to the political parties a CD-ROM containing the voter roll used for the 2000 national elections, for their review and comment. However, other key steps are still outstanding, including the formulation of an operational strategy for the reconstitution of civil registers, the designation of a technical operator for identification and the establishment of regional and local structures of the Independent Electoral Commission. While UNOCI has assisted the Commission to train all regional commissioners, the appointment and training of personnel for commissions at the departmental and sous-préfecture levels remain outstanding. Meanwhile, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1765 (2007), UNOCI has established a small support cell, which will assist my Special Representative in the certification of all stages of the electoral process.

I. Financial support for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement

31. During a donors' round table convened by Prime Minister Soro on 18 July, the international partners of Côte d'Ivoire pledged approximately $388 million in support of the Government's post-conflict recovery programme. The pledged funds exceeded the funding needs for the implementation of the peace agreement by some $136 million. The United Nations worked with the Office of the Prime Minister to establish appropriate disbursement mechanisms and, in that regard, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will establish and manage a basket fund for the "Programme de sortie de crise", pursuant to a formal request by the Prime Minister on 16 August 2007. UNDP is also in the process of formally establishing a basket fund to receive contributions for the organization of the elections, whose costs are estimated at $80 million.

32. In addition, an assistance package in the amount of $700,000 was approved under the emergency window of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund in order to support the Government of Burkina Faso in its ongoing facilitation efforts. UNOCI and UNDP will jointly implement the support project over the course of six months.

V. Deployment of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

A. Military component

33. As at 15 September, the military strength of UNOCI stood at 8,039 personnel, comprising 7,755 troops, 192 military observers and 92 staff officers, against a total authorized strength of 8,115. Of the Mission's 11 battalions, five are deployed in the western part of the country, four in the east and two in Abidjan. One aviation unit, three engineering companies, one transport company and one special force company are providing enabling capacity and operational reserve to the force. A total of 14 light infantry companies and three mechanized companies are deployed in Sector West, while 10 light infantry companies, one armoured company and an aviation unit are deployed in Sector East. The Sous-Groupement de Sécurité, comprising 279 personnel, provides close protection for members of Government and other dignitaries.

34. In my last report, I recommended that UNOCI conduct a troop-to-task analysis with a view to determining how the mission would redeploy from the former zone of confidence and reinforce its presence in the western and northern parts of the country. In that regard, it is envisaged that two new camps will be established in Divo and Issia, as troops are redeployed from the former zone of confidence.

35. With regard to the Security Council's intention to review the mandate and troop level of UNOCI by 15 October, it will be recalled that, in my 14 May report (S/2007/275), I proposed that progress on two key benchmarks, namely, completion of the disarmament and demobilization process as well as the completion of the restoration of State administration throughout the country, would trigger the initial adjustments in the Mission's mandate and troop levels. However, progress on those benchmarks has been very limited, as indicated in paragraphs 20 to 26 above. It is, therefore, essential to maintain current UNOCI troop levels and conduct a further review at the time of submission of my next report.

36. In the meantime, the Licorne force that provides critical support to UNOCI reduced its presence in Côte d'Ivoire by 1,000 troops in two phases in May and August 2007. With that troop reduction, Licorne closed its bases in the west in May and in Yamoussoukro in September. However, French forces continue to patrol in the whole area of operation and maintain their full quick reaction capacity, in keeping with the protocol signed by UNOCI and Licorne Force commanders in December 2005.

B. Police component

37. As at 15 September, 1,098 police personnel were deployed to UNOCI, against an authorized ceiling of 1,200, including 348 officers and 750 personnel in formed police units. The UNOCI police component includes 25 female officers.

38. The UNOCI police component provides support, mentoring and advice to the Ivorian national police and the mixed police units responsible for securing the former zone of confidence. The United Nations police also has an important role with respect to training auxiliaries deployed to the north and the overall reform of

the security sector. In the context of the overall restoration of state authority, United Nations police are assisting in the redeployment of the Ivorian law enforcement personnel to the north. Accordingly, a formed police unit currently stationed in Abidjan will be moved to Boundiali, in the north-west of the country. A team site in Sakassou will be redeployed to Daoukro, as will a station from Danane to Boundiali.

VI. Human rights and the rule of law

A. Human rights situation

39. While serious human rights violations in the country have decreased since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, the general human rights situation continued to be characterized by abuses inflicted on civilians by the Government's defence and security forces and Forces nouvelles elements, including intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, and racketeering at checkpoints. Reports were received about the excessive use of force by elements of the defence and security forces in Abidjan, Yamoussoukro, Toumodi, Duékoué and elsewhere.

40. During the period under review, UNOCI also received reports of trafficking of children for labour and prostitution in the south, and torture and ill-treatment committed by Forces nouvelles elements and Dozo traditional hunters in the north. In the meantime, in Daloa, in the west of the country, the first jury trial since the start of the crisis concluded during the reporting period, and found 11 of 21 defendants guilty of participating in the 2005 ethnically motivated massacre of 71 inhabitants of the Petit Duékoué and Guitrozon villages in the south-west of the country.

41. Human trafficking for forced prostitution and labour is a growing problem in Côte d'Ivoire. In May, the Ministry of Family, Women and Social Affairs, the judicial police, the International Organization for Migration, and several national and international organizations adopted an anti-trafficking programme to reinforce national capacity to investigate and respond to cases and provide victims with legal protection. In that regard, investigations were conducted into a network that traffics women and girls from the subregion, a case involving 25 women from the Philippines who claimed to have fallen victim to traffickers, and the circumstances surrounding the presence in the country of several Ghanaian children with unrelated adults.

42. The National Human Rights Commission, which was established in January, elected Victorine Wodié, a former Minister for Human Rights, as its President in July. UNOCI and the Commission will collaborate closely to promote and protect human rights in Côte d'Ivoire. Meanwhile, a technical review is under way of a draft national action plan for the promotion and protection of human rights that had been prepared by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights with support from the Mission.

43. UNOCI also continued to advocate the consideration of children's rights in the implementation of the peace process, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1460 (2003) and 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict. In that regard, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, who visited the country from 4 to 7 September, impressed upon national authorities the importance

of establishing protective measures for children during the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. In an encouraging development, the Forces nouvelles, which in 2005 committed themselves to implementing an action plan to end the use of child soldiers, submitted to UNOCI a progress report on the final stage of its implementation in August. A total of 85 children associated with the fighting forces had been identified, including 27 girls. In the west of the country, the United Nations Children Fund's (UNICEF) provided assistance to 204 children, including 84 girls, associated with the militias.

44. Pursuant to the amnesty ordinance issued on 12 April, 61 Ivorian detainees, including 40 civilians and 21 military personnel, were released in Abidjan. Seven persons detained in Korhogo and a person detained in Bouaké were also released. During a ceremony held in Bouaké on 26 June, the Forces nouvelles released three prisoners of war. In granting amnesty to prisoners, the political and military leadership stressed that the intention was to consolidate the peace process, rather than condone past misdeeds. At the same time, the amnesty ordinance fails to explicitly exclude war crimes and crimes against humanity, and is therefore not in accordance with both the Ouagadougou Agreement and the obligations of Côte d'Ivoire under applicable norms of international law.

B. Judicial and corrections systems

45. In June, the Mission published two reports focused on the Ivorian justice system and on juvenile justice, both of which contained recommendations on how the Government could improve the management, impartiality and accountability of the judiciary. Discussions began between the Government and the European Union on a five-year financial assistance package that will require the Government to make commitments in the areas of democratic governance, rule of law and anti-corruption.

46. The prison workers union held its third strike since 2001, from 25 July to 3 August, to protest the failure of the Government to improve conditions of service. The strike affected all 22 prisons in the Government-controlled zone, and was only called off after the Minister for Justice and Human Rights agreed to meet the union's demand to bring salaries and conditions of service in line with those of the police and other agencies. Meanwhile, UNOCI continued to monitor the conditions of detention at prisons throughout the country, many of which are overcrowded with inadequate health and sanitation facilities.

VII. Humanitarian situation

47. During the reporting period, the Ministry of Solidarity and Victims of War developed an assisted return programme for persons displaced by the war and drafted an ordinance on the indemnification of victims of war which has yet to be signed. The Minister also conducted a visit to areas of return in the west to sensitize the communities to the forthcoming return process. In the meantime, many internally displaced persons declined to return to their communities owing to insecurity and the absence of a legal framework for claiming occupied homes and properties.

48. For its part, the humanitarian community in Côte d'Ivoire continued to work to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their areas of origin. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reinforced its presence in Guiglo, the Duékoué corridor and the area around Zou. Under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, the humanitarian agencies and their partners intensified monitoring and "go and see" visits in villages of return in Zou, to pave the way for voluntary returns in safety and dignity. My Special Representative on the Human Rights for Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Walter Kälin, also visited the country for six days in June.

49. The mid-year review of the Consolidated Appeal Process, launched during the reporting period, focused on identifying and responding to the needs of displaced and other vulnerable persons, as well as host communities and communities of return. The review determined that the outstanding financial requirements for humanitarian activities could be reduced by 50 per cent, bringing the total requirements down to $51.5 million for 2007. I encourage donors to consider providing support to close the remaining funding gap of $37.5 million. In the meantime, I am pleased that the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator announced in August the allocation of $2.5 million from the Central Emergency Relief Fund for humanitarian programmes in Côte d'Ivoire. In August, the World Food Programme also launched an 18-month protracted relief and recovery operation, which aims to provide assistance to a million people affected by conflict through school feeding, food for work and training, as well as targeted nutrition programmes. On 20 and 21 September, in collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Government officials, NGOs and representatives from the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Coordination Committee, the Humanitarian Coordinator launched the Consolidated Appeal Process for 2008, which focused on strict humanitarian-related matters in the west in order to complement the Government's Programme de sortie de crise.

VIII. Economic recovery

50. Côte d'Ivoire's economic growth is forecasted to reach 1.5 per cent in real terms. Preliminary data for the first half of 2007 suggest that that is achievable. The forecast for public sector finances and the proposed 2007 budget are based on prudent macroeconomic estimates. Data for the first half of the year are in line with the full-year budget.

51. Relations between the Government, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are being regularized. The first segment of the Fund's Emergency post-conflict assistance programme of $60 million was disbursed early in August. The Bank's post-conflict assistance programme of $120 million in support of the Government's emergency recovery programme was also made effective in early August, although there are conditions the Government will need to fulfil before the funds can be disbursed. Furthermore, the Government is on track to settle arrears owed to the World Bank and the African Development Bank. The Government and the World Bank plan to carry out an arrears clearance operation in early 2008. That will allow a full Bank programme, including the reactivation of its existing portfolio totalling $104 million, a new HIV/AIDS grant of $20 million and a governance operation of $15 million, along with additional support anticipated from IMF and the African Development Bank.

52. On the programmatic front, the United Nations Development Group Office and the World Bank have sent to Abidjan two post-conflict needs assessment experts to undertake a desk review of existing documentation available with the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank, and to establish a time-bound workplan and possible needs to be addressed.

IX. Media monitoring and public information

53. During the reporting period, UNOCI continued its efforts to promote an improved media environment. In addition to regular contacts with the Ministry of Communication and the national media regulatory bodies, the Mission conducted seminars with local and international partners for more than 120 print and broadcast journalists on responsible reporting of the elections and the peace process in general. The Mission also began discussions with the national programme for the redeployment of the administration on the elaboration of a joint media strategy to facilitate the redeployment exercise.

54. The Mission strengthened its communications campaign to ensure that the Ivorian population is well informed about the peace process and the Mission's supportive role in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. In that regard, UNOCI initiated a number of sensitization activities to promote the peace process, including a peace caravan that visited schools in Abidjan, town hall meetings and reconciliation forums with traditional chiefs in areas where ethnic tensions have been prevalent, particularly in the west. Meanwhile, the Mission's radio station, ONUCI FM, continued to provide information on the peace process through its news and other programmes.

X. Gender

55. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, UNOCI continued to impress upon Ivorian parties their responsibility for ensuring the full participation of women in the implementation of the peace process. The Mission supported in particular the efforts of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Women and Family to advocate a 30 per cent quota for women in the political and public arena.

XI. HIV/AIDS

56. UNOCI also continued to mainstream HIV/AIDS awareness in the Mission's activities. Since my last report, 39 civilian and 1,533 military personnel have participated in HIV/AIDS awareness training and 194 peer educators have been trained to conduct sensitization exercises within their respective battalions. Voluntary counselling and testing services have been provided for 1,635 Mission personnel. UNOCI, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNDP collaborated to produce 5,000 brochures and 52 post-exposure prophylaxis kits that have been made available to all United Nations staff members.

XII. Personnel conduct and discipline

57. In my last report, I referred to allegations by civil society groups of cases of misconduct by some United Nations troops based in Abidjan. The complainants retracted their allegations during the conduct of investigations. However, further allegations were received concerning widespread sexual exploitation and abuse by UNOCI military personnel deployed in the Bouaké area. A preliminary assessment by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the UNOCI Conduct and Discipline Team determined that the allegations warranted further investigations. The troop contributing country concerned sent a team to Côte d'Ivoire to conduct further investigations in collaboration with the Office. Meanwhile, the contingent concerned remains confined to its camp except for essential duties, pending the outcome of the investigation. The investigation was suspended in August due to the inability of the joint team to obtain access to the alleged victims. Consultations are ongoing with a view to resuming the investigation as soon as possible.

58. The Mission continues to work towards full compliance with my zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. In that regard, 5,538 UNOCI personnel, including 3,031 military and 1,832 civilian personnel, have to date received mandatory training on the United Nations standards of conduct. The Mission's Conduct and Discipline Team also conducted fact-finding exercises during the reporting period to observe the behaviour of personnel throughout the Mission's area of responsibility. Based on the team's findings, a series of recommendations were prepared and presented to the Officer-in-Charge, who instructed the Force Commander to ensure that they are implemented. Among the new measures being implemented is a further restriction on the movement of military personnel.

XIII. Observations

59. The positive political atmosphere that has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement gives the Ivorian parties the opportunity to make concrete progress towards its implementation. I am deeply concerned that the failure to adhere to the timelines set out in the Agreement has led to a slackening of momentum which, if it continues, could undermine successful implementation. The overall peace process and the improved security situation will remain fragile and vulnerable to reversals unless it is underpinned by concrete progress, especially in the implementation of the crucial tasks related to the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the disarmament of combatants, the identification of the population, the restoration of State authority throughout the country, the preparation of the voter register, the unification of the two armed forces and respect for human rights. I therefore urge Prime Minister Soro and President Gbagbo to take the necessary measures to give added impetus to the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, including by reverting to specific implementation timelines, providing requisite resources to the integrated command centre and mixed units, resolving the military ranks issue, unifying the two forces and completing the processes to dismantle the militias and achieve disarmament and rendering the new National Human Rights Commission operational.

60. I commend the international partners of Côte d'Ivoire for their overwhelming response to the Government's appeal for funding for the implementation of the

Ouagadougou Agreement and for the post-conflict recovery. The onus is now on the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to do its part and accelerate the implementation process. At the same time, the national institutions tasked with leading the implementation process require increased support from the international partners, especially in the areas of logistical support and capacity-building. I call on the Member States to extend the necessary assistance to those institutions, especially the integrated command centre and the mixed units.

61. The continuing human rights abuses, albeit at lower levels of intensity than prior to the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, are extremely disturbing. The leadership of the Forces nouvelles and the command of the defence and security forces of Côte d'Ivoire have an obligation to address those problems and to ensure discipline among their personnel. I also urge the Government to dismantle the militias in the west and in Abidjan without further delay, and to enforce the law against the leaders and members of the so-called student groups that intimidate and carry out acts of violence against civilians and civil society organizations and United Nations personnel and property.

62. The attack against Prime Minister Soro, which occurred at a time when efforts were under way to accelerate the peace process, undermined the positive atmosphere engendered by the Ouagadougou Agreement. I once more strongly condemn the attack and commend the determination shown by the President and the Prime Minister to stay the course in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement despite that serious attempt to disrupt the peace process.

63. I would like to assure the Ivorian people and parties of the continued support of UNOCI. In that regard, I also wish to assure the parties of the political opposition that Security Council resolution 1765 (2007) preserves the full role of the United Nations in certifying the electoral process. The resolution simply transferred the role from the High Representative for the elections to my Special Representative, without diminishing it.

64. Despite the devastation it has suffered from the conflict, Côte d'Ivoire remains critical to the economic stability and security of the subregion. I therefore encourage the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to continue to work closely with UNOCI in supporting the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. The Facilitator of the Ivorian peace process, President Compaoré of Burkina Faso, should be congratulated for the crucial role he is playing in facilitating the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. I call upon Member States to contribute the necessary funding for his facilitation efforts, including by providing support to the Office of his Special Representative in Abidjan.

65. In the meantime, I recommend that the troop levels of UNOCI be maintained at current levels as the benchmarks identified in my 14 May report (S/2007/275) have yet to be met. I will provide further recommendations in that regard in my January 2008 report.

66. In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Officer-in-Charge of UNOCI, Abou Moussa, and all UNOCI military and civilian personnel for their continued commitment to supporting the peace process. I would also like to pay tribute to President Compaoré for his tireless facilitation efforts. Finally, I thank all troop and police contributing countries; ECOWAS; the African Union; United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; humanitarian organizations; multilateral and bilateral donors; and international and local non-governmental organizations, for their important contributions to the pursuit of peace in Côte d'Ivoire.

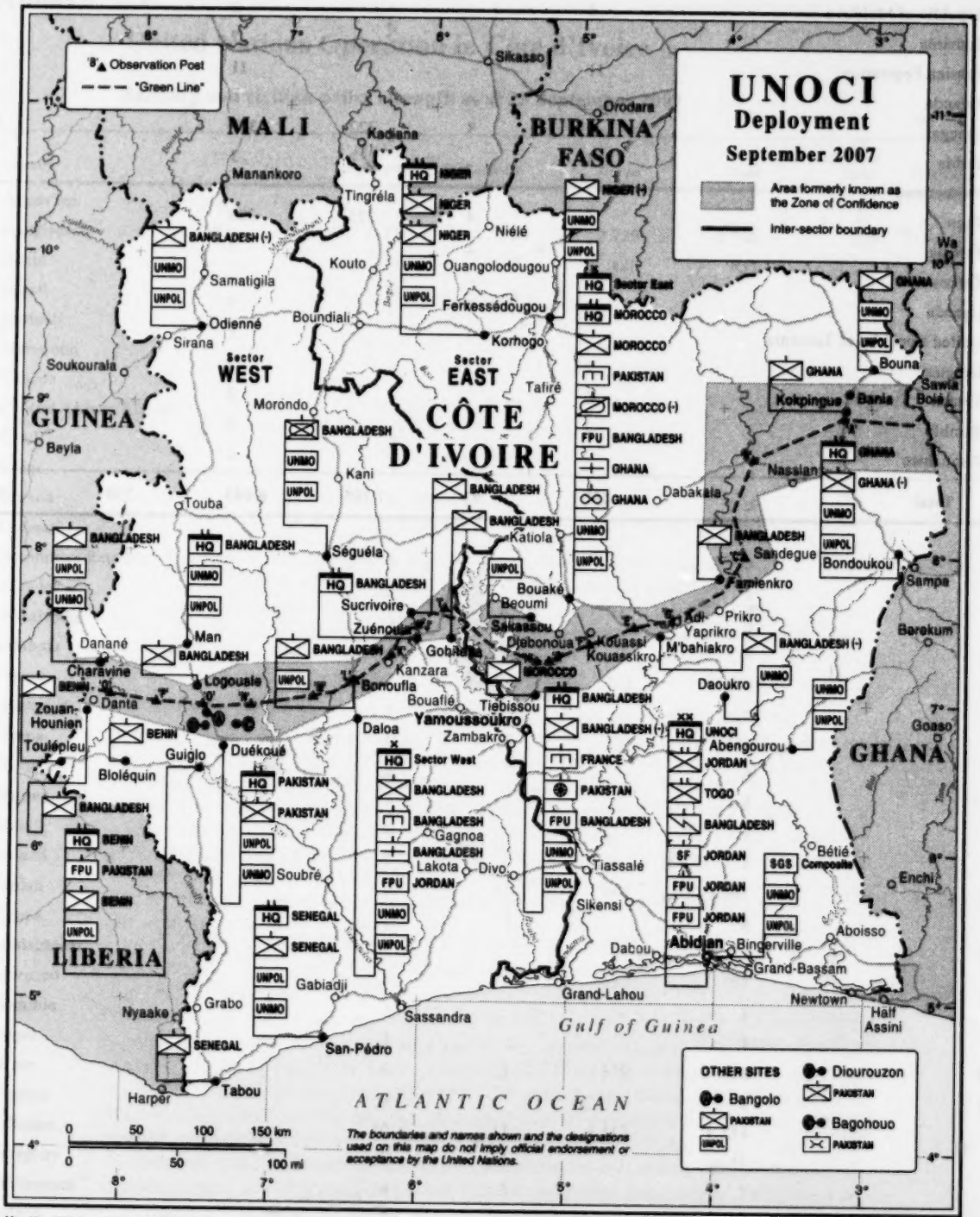
Annex

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

Military and civilian police strength as at 25 September 2007

Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Formed Police Units*	*Civilian police*
Argentina						3
Bangladesh	11	9	2 720	2 740	250	1
Benin	8	9	420	437		38
Brazil	4	3		7		
Burundi						14
Cameroon						54
Canada						2
Central African Republic						1
Chad	3			3		6
China	4			4		
Croatia	3			3		
Djibouti						29
Dominican Republic	4			4		
Ecuador	2			2		
El Salvador	3			3		1
Ethiopia	4			4		
France	2	11	173	186		10
Guatemala	5			5		
Ghana	6	7	531	544		5
Gambia	3			3		
Guinea	3			3		
India	8			8		2
Ireland	2			2		
Jordan	7	11	1 049	1 067	375	4
Kenya	5	3		8		
Madagascar						12
Morocco	1	3	733	737		
Namibia	3			3		
Nepal	3			3		
Niger	6	3	379	388		49
Nigeria	8			8		11
Pakistan	10	11	1 113	1 134	125	2
Paraguay	9	2		11		
Philippines	4	3		7		3
Poland	2			2		

Republic of Moldova	3			3		
Romania	7			7		
Russian Federation	11			11		
Rwanda						14
Senegal	8	8	322	338		74
Serbia	3			3		
Switzerland						2
Togo	6	4	315	325		1
Tunisia	5	2		7		
Turkey						4
Uganda	5	2		7		
United Republic of Tanzania		1		1		
Uruguay	2			2		4
Yemen	5			5		5
Zambia	2			2		
Zimbabwe	2			2		
Total	**192**	**92**	**7 755**	**8 043**	**750**	**348**



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